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SUPPLEMENT

TO

THE MADRID GAZETTE,

OF

THE 14th OCTOBER, 1806.

ON Sunday, the 7th of September last, Dr. Francis Xavier Balmis, Surgeon Extraordinary to the King, had the honour of kissing his Majesty's hand, on occasion of his return from a voyage round the world, executed with the sole object of carrying to all the possessions of the Crown of Spain, situated beyond the seas, and to those of several other nations, the inestimable gift of Vaccine Inoculation. His Majesty has inquired, with the liveliest interest, into all that materially related to the expedition, and learned, with the utmost satisfaction, that it's result has exceeded the most sanguine expectations that were entertained at the time of the enterprize.

This undertaking had been committed to the diligence of several Members of the Faculty, and subordinate persons, carrying with them twenty-two children, who had never undergone the Small-pox, selected for the preservation of the precious fluid, by transmitting it successively from one to another, during the course of the voyage. The expedition set sail from Corunna, under the direction of Balmis, on the 30th November, 1803. It made the first stoppage at the Canary Islands, the second at Porto-Rico, and the third at the Caracas. On leaving that province, by the port of La Guayra, it was divided into two branches: one part sailing to South America, under the charge of the Subdirector Don Francis Salvani; the other, with the Director Balmis on board, steering for the Havanah, and thence for Yucatan. There a subdivision took place: the Professor Francis Pastor proceeding from the port of Sisal, to that of Villa Hermosa, in the province of Tobasca, for the purpose of propagating Vaccination in the district of Ciudad Real of Chiapa, and on to Goatemala, making a circuit of four hundred leagues, through a long and rough road, comprising Oaxaca; while the rest of the expedition, which arrived without accident at Veracruz, traversed not only the Vice-royalty of New Spain, but also the interior provinces; whence it was to return to Mexico, which was the point of re-union.

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This precious preservative against the ravages of the Small-pox has already been extended through the whole of North America, to the coasts of Sonora and Sinaloa, and even to the Gentiles and Neophites of High Pimeria. In each capital a Council has been instituted, composed of the Principal Authorities, and the most zealous Members of the Faculty, charged with the preservation of this invaluable specific, as a sacred deposit, for which they are accountable to the King and to posterity.

This being accomplished, it was the next care of the Director to carry this part of the expedition from America to Asia, crowned with the most brilliant success, and, with it, the comfort of Humanity. Some difficulties having been surmounted, he embarked in the port of Acapulco for the Philippine Islands; that being the point at which, if attainable, it was originally intended that the undertaking should be terminated.

The bounty of Divine Providence having vouchsafed to second the great and pious designs of the King, Balmis happily performed the voyage in little more than two months: carrying with him, from New Spain, twenty-six children, destined to be vaccinated in succession, as before; and as many of them were infants, they were committed to the care of the Matron of the Foundling Hospital at La Corunna, who, in this, as well as the former voyages, conducted herself in a manner to merit approbation. The expedition having arrived at the Philippines, and propagated the specific in the islands subject to his Catholic Majesty, Balmis, having concluded his philanthropic commission, concerted with the Captain General the means of extending the beneficence of the King, and the glory of his august name, to the remotest confines of Asia.

In point of fact, the Cow-pox has been disseminated through the vast Archipelago of the Visayan Islands, whose Chiefs, accustomed to wage perpetual war with us, have laid down their arms, admiring the generosity of an enemy, who conferred upon them the blessings of health and life, at the time when they were labouring under the ravages of an epidemic Small-pox. The principal persons of the Portuguese colonies, and of the Chinese empire, manifested themselves no less beholden, when Balmis reached Macao and Canton; in both which places he accomplished the introduction of fresh virus, in all its activity, by the means already related: a result, which the English, on repeated trials, had failed to procure, in the various occasions when they brought out portions of matter in the ships of their East India Company, which lost their efficacy on the passage, and arrived inert.

After having propagated the Vaccine at Canton, as far as possibility and the political circumstances of the empire would permit, and having confided the further dissemination of it to the Physicians of

the English factory at the above-mentioned port, Balmis returned to Macao, and embarked in a Portuguese vessel for Lisbon; where he arrived on the 15th August. In the way he stopped at St. Helena, in which, as in other places, by dint of exhortation and perseverance, he prevailed upon the English to adopt the astonishing antidote, which they had undervalued for the space of more than eight years, though it was a discovery of their nation, and though it was sent to them by JENNER himself.

Of that branch of the expedition which was destined for Peru, it is ascertained that it was shipwrecked in one of the mouths of the River de la Magdelena; but having derived immediate succour from the natives, from the Magistrates adjacent, and from the Governor of Carthagena, the Subdirector, the three Members of the Faculty who accompanied him, and the children, were saved, with the fluid in good preservation, which they extended in that port, and its province, with activity and success. Thence it was carried to the isthmus of Panama, and persons properly provided with all necessaries, undertook the long and painful navigation of the River de la Madalena: separating, when they reached the interior, to discharge their commission in the towns of Teneriffe, Mompox, Ocana, Socorro, San Gil y Medellin, in the valley of Cucuta, and in the cities of Pamplona, Giron, Tunja, Velez, and other places in the neighbourhood, until they met at Santa Fe: leaving every where suitable instructions for the Members of the Faculty, and, in the more considerable towns, regulations conformable to those rules which the Director had prescribed for the preservation of the virus; which the Viceroy affirms to have been communicated to *fifty thousand* persons, without one unfavourable result. Towards the close of March, 1805, they prepared to continue their journey in separate tracks, for the purpose of extending themselves, with greater facility and promptitude, over the remaining districts of the Vice-royalty, situated in the road of Popayan, Cuença, and Quito, as far as Lima. In the August following they reached Guayaquil.

The result of this expedition has been, not merely to spread the Vaccine among all people, whether friends or enemies; among Moors, among Visayans, and among Chinese; but also to secure to posterity, in the dominions of his Majesty, the perpetuity of so great a benefit, partly by means of the Central Committees that have been established, as well as by the discovery which Balmis made of an indigenous matter in the cows of the valley of Atlixco, near the city of Puebla de los Angeles; in the neighbourhood of that of Valladolid de Mechoacan, where the Adjutant Antonio Gutierrez found it; and in the district of Calabozo, in the province of Caracas, where Don Carlos de Pozo, Physician of the residence, found it.

A multitude of observations, which will be published without delay, respecting the developement of the Vaccine in various climes, and respecting it's efficacy, not merely in preventing the Natural Small-pox, but in curing simultaneously other morbid affections of the human frame, will manifest how important to humanity will prove the consequences of an expedition, which has no parallel in history.

Though the object of this undertaking was limited to the communication of the Vaccine in every quarter; to the instruction of Professors, and to the establishment of regulations, which might serve to render it perpetual,—nevertheless, the Director has omitted no means of rendering his services beneficial, at the same time, to Agriculture and the Sciences. He brings with him a considerable collection of exotic plants, He has caused to be drawn the most valuable subjects in Natural History. He has amassed much important information; and, among other claims to the gratitude of his conntry, not the least consists in having inported a valuable assemblage of trees and vegetables, in a state to admit of propagation, and which, being cultivated in those parts of the peninsula that are most congenial to their growth, will render this expedition as memorable in the annals of Agriculture, as in those of Medicine and Humanity. It is hoped that the Subdirector and his coadjutors, appointed to carry these blessings to Peru, will shortly return by way of Buenos-Ayres, after having accomplished their journey through that Vice-royalty, the Vice-royalty of Lima, and the districts of Chili and Charcas; and that they will bring with them such collections and observations as they have been able to acquire, according to the instrnctions given by the Director, without losing sight of the philantrhropic commission which they received from his Majesty, in the plenitude of his zeal for the welfare of the human race.

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